

Letters to The Times

Bruckner Expressway

Changes in Original Plan Declared Cause of Delayed Completion

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

I have read your recent editorial "Road to Nowhere" and must agree that "a road ending up in the air is of no benefit to anybody but birds." However, an explanatory note is necessary.

The situation regarding the Bruckner Expressway, Section 1, resulted from a late decision by the Department of Public Works under the previous administration to revise plans for the facility to conform with standards of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways.

The complex redesign of Bruckner, necessitating extensive changes in the original plans, went forward during 1959, the first year of the current administration. The plans were completed, reviewed by the District Office and sent to Albany on April 15, and the \$10,500,000 Contract 3 was let on June 23—the earliest possible date following final review of design in the main office. The contractor for this section has informed the department he will make every effort to complete construction in 1962, instead of 1963 as scheduled.

The department is now also planning to receive bids in October for construction of the first section of the Arthur V. Sheridan Expressway, which will connect Bruckner Expressway with the Cross Bronx Expressway.

Provisions of Design

Bruckner Expressway had been placed under detailed design in 1955 under standards of the state arterial highway system, and it was then planned to build the route in three sections, beginning in 1957. This design provided, among other things, for a highway intersection at grade, with a traffic light, at Hunts Point Avenue.

Some months after enactment of the Federal Highway Act of 1956, standards for arterial routes on the interstate system, of which the Bruckner Expressway was one, were substantially revised by the United States Bureau of Public Roads. In September, 1957, department engineers, together with Bureau of Public Road officials, agreed it would be desirable to redesign Contract 3—the missing section—to eliminate the grade crossing. The first contract had already been prepared for bid-taking in October, 1957, and the second was being readied for letting, early in 1958. Various studies and conferences followed, and it was not until Nov. 13, 1958—approximately six weeks before leaving office—that the then chief engineer of the department requested approval of redesign from the then superintendent.

As you can see, therefore, the present situation is one which was inherited by this administration from its predecessor, and all we can now do is correct it.

We will continue to progress our highway program in a sensible and orderly fashion and do everything possible to avert situations such as that cited. NICHOLAS D. CAMMERO, Director of Public Relations, New York State Department of Public Works.

Albany, Aug. 19, 1960.